DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 047 869 RC 005 094

AUTHOR Ayala, Armando A.
TITLE Rationale for Early Childhood Bilingual-Bicultural Education.
PUB DATE 7 Feb 71
NOTE 17p.; Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual convention, 4-7 February 1971, New York, New York

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Biculturalism, *Bilingual Education, *Cultural Awareness, Early Childhood Education, Educational Improvement, Educationally Disadvantaged, *Language Handicapped, *Mexican Americans, Minority Group Teachers, Student Alienation, *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

The document presents a rationale favoring early childhood bilingual-bicultural education. In a review of the literature, the author points out the need for a bilingual approach to education in an effort to help non-English-speaking citizens lead more productive lives in our society. It is noted that there is opposition to this approach from the many investigators who claim that there is evidence linking native bilingualism with retardation and underachievement in schools. The author cites the more recent studies which show that this handicap results from the way communities and schools have dealt with children who speak another language and not from the children's bilingualism; thus, he feels it is desirable to erase the reigning Anglo stereotype and to recognize the Mexican American in developing curricula and educational programs. Included in the document are discussions of types of bilingual programs and thought processes involved, along with conclusions and recommendations for continuing bilingual-bicultural educational programs and corresponding teacher education programs. (EJ)

ED047869

RATIONALE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Armando A. Ayala
Sacramento State College[1]

RECEIVED
FEB 12 1971
NMSU
E.R.I.C.

Review of the Literature

Bilingual education has come of age in the United States in an attempt to help citizens, who are not English dominant, to lead a productive bicultural life in this society. It is also believed that students from minority groups who are now not succeeding in school will benefit from a bilingual approach to education and therefore become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural.

Chester C. Christian (1965) points out that at a conference held in November 1963 which was called by the then Vice-President of the United States Lyndon B. Johnson, as chairman of the President's Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity, it was concluded that the schools should capitalize on the bicultural situation in the Southwest rather than ignore it or even attempt to repress it. Also, it was felt desirable to erase the reigning "Anglo" stereotype to recognize the value of the Mexican American cultural heritage, and to show the Mexican American why he should be proud of his cultural background and recognize himself as capable of offering something of value to the culture at large.

At this same conference Anthony J. Calebrese, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfere, was moderator of a discussion group in which it was decided that schools should provide acculturation for Mexican American children through bilingual instruction in Spanish and English, and

RC005094

---

[1] Placer County Office of Education, Area III Valley Intercultural Program, Project Manager.

Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association annual convention, 4-7 February 1971, New York, New York.

make use of the curriculum to reflect Spanish as well as American traditions, and should hire teachers trained in both cultures. It was expressed that only through such a modified educational program could the Mexican American be given the sense of personal identification which is necessary to his educational maturation.

There is however some opposition to bilingual education as was reported in the H/E/W/ O.E. Report of 1968:

> There is plentiful evidence linking native bilingualism with retardation and underachievement in schools. Investigators have claimed that early childhood bilingualism is a "handicap", has detrimental effects on intelligence, contributes to mental confusion and language deficiency, that it leads to retardation in school, etc. Recent studies however show that the "handicap" results from the way schools and communities have dealt with children who speak another language and <u>not</u> from the children's bilingualism.

Dr. Jack Forbes during his address to the Southwest Intergroup Relations Council held in Austin, Texas in 1970 stated that since the 1870's schools in the Southwest had not been mutual, culturally speaking. These schools, he said, had been controlled by the Anglo-American population and the curricula throughout have been Anglo in character. Dr. Forbes further pointed out that these schools had not been good for Mexican American children because they tended to lead to a great deal of alienation and a great deal of hostility... Also the confusion which is caused in the mind of the Mexican American child not knowing what he should be proud of, not knowing what language he should speak, not knowing whether to completely accept what Anglo people had been telling him and forget his Mexican identity, or whether he should listen to what his parents and perhaps other people have said and be proud of his Mexican identity. (Stanfield 1970)

Early childhood bilingual education would help the Mexican American in his acculturation to the dominant society. McGill University carried out a series of studies concerned with language learning. A social-psychological theory of language learning was one of the important outcomes of these studies reported by W. E. Lambert (1963) and cited by Taylor (1970) as follows:

> This theory, in belief, holds that an individual successfully acquiring a second language (English in the case of the Mexican American) gradually adopts various aspects of behavior which characterize members of another linguistic-cultural group. The learner's ethnocentric tendencies and his attitude toward the other group are believed to determine his success in learning the new language. His motivation to learn is thought to be determined by his attitudes and by his orientation toward learning a second language.

Mexican American children have been retained in the primary grades until they learn English. Dr. George I. Sanchez, School of Education of the University of Texas at Austin, made a plea for bilingual education to the Southwest Intergroup Relations Council. (Stanfield 1970):

> It is normal practice to retain Spanish-speaking children in the first grade for two or even three years, because of deficiency in English--while instruction goes on entirely in English. He added that this policy is psychologically ruinous and without pedagogical reason.

English dominant students also benefit from a bilingual program; they develop a pride in the fact that they are learning a language other than the one usually spoken at home.

Lee Logan, Principal of Coral Way School in Miami reports that expert observers have noted that the Anglo children in the bilingual program acquire excellent Spanish pronunciation, however English of Cubans shows interference of Spanish. This is attributed to the fact

that Anglos hear nothing but native Spanish, while in the homes of Cubans the students hear a good deal of heavily-accented English spoken by adult immigrants. (Gaarder 1967) For this reason it is necessary that the model bilingual program have teachers who serve as models for the language they teach. It may be necessary to use two teachers or a teacher and an instruction aide, each presenting the lessons in the language in which they feel more comfortable.

The writer feels that this example should be shared with the parents of students participating in a bilingual program. Specifically parents who are also trying to learn English, that is that these parents should avoid practicing their English with the children, so that their accent is not transferred to the young students.

Using English as the only language of instruction has caused the Mexican American social and psychological problems. Ramirez (1969) points out that fear of envy, as well as fear of being accused of discarding the values of the folk culture for those of Anglo society, also discourages the Mexican American child's motivation to excel in school. Even the practice of using English outside the classroom is ridiculed by peers as attempts to become Anglizised.

The result of such criticism is an aspect of what Lambert (1963) has termed "anomie", a feeling of not comfortably belonging in one social group or the other.

Ramirez is quoted by Stanfield (1970: page #) where he says:

> . . . students that have identified with the Anglo culture and rejected the Mexican American culture experience a lot of conflicts with their parents. They become alienated from their

parents. They experience a lot of health problems, and guilt and anxiety.

Using Spanish in the classroom would give Mexican Americans new pride, new status, and new incentive. Guerra (1967) explains it thus:

> When Spanish and English are used without restraint in the classroom without stigma, without apologies, classroom atmosphere will lead to better Spanish and English learning. By implication, the dignity of children who come from Spanish speaking homes will be enhanced, and their psychological desire to learn English greatly strengthened.

Elizabeth Ott (1967) found that many of the youngsters from a non-English background are victims of economic poverty and products of illiteracy. Some do not succeed because of poor attendance--a condition very often caused by family migration. However, by far the largest single cause of academic failure to achieve is the language barrier.

> Typically, Mexican American children have been given the same dosage of instruction including reading in English, as the native English speaking child, ignoring the fact that the children from Spanish-speaking background had little or no facility in oral English. The results have been disastrous in terms of human loss. (Ott, 1967)

In reviewing the literature, the writer found that noted scholars are reporting that achieving a high degree of bilingualism is difficult for non-English speakers in this society. R. E. Davis (Zintz 1969) states that the basic problems in the Southwest are biculturalism not bilingualism because language expresses the values of a culture; culture, by determining behavioral practices and goals, limits the connotations and denotations of the language.

In studying the effects of bilingualism on the intellectual and social development of the child, J. P. Sofietti (Taylor 1970), found most

of the difficulties and retardations due to the bicultural aspect of the situations.

These findings support the cultural component which is called for in the guidelines for bilingual programs to be funded under Title VII. of E.S.E.A.

If you are to talk to a child you must speak a language that he understands (Stanfield 1970), and, equally important in a bilingual and bicultural area, is the acceptance, the respect, the appreciation, the wholesome self-image imparted non-verbally--to Anglo and Mexican Americans alike.

Some attempts have been made to remedy the language problem of the Mexican American but in most parts these attempts have been programs in teaching English as a second language which serve to bridge the student from Spanish dominancy to English dominancy. Where these programs have been implemented, they have given Spanish a negative stigma in the eyes of the Mexican American.

Stanfield (1970) points to the observations of Dr. Mildred Dickeman, Chairman of the Department of Anthropology at Sonoma State College:

> These is a big difference between two-way bilingual education and second language programs. You can use any language as an inferior idiom to assist students to learn the superior majority language without conveying respect for the student or his language...But you cannot agree to teach the language... to these well-off upper middle-class Anglo students without giving it respect. You have redefined the Mexican American student by teaching his language to the Anglos. You have also redefined teacher attitudes, which is the crux of the matter. It is teacher attitudes more than any other factor which determine student outcome--far more.

Dr. Vera John expressed her views toward teaching English as a second language. This report was made during the Early Childhood Bilingual Education Conference held at Yeshiva University in 1968.

> In dealing with non-English-speaking children, American education has stressed the need to teach the dominant language more effectively to non-English speakers. Such techniques as teaching English as a second language are not designed to improve the child's cognitive development or his general language ability. They are designed only to improve his English. Bilingual Education on the other hand, is not merely a teaching technique to improve a child's English. Through instruction the child's native language and English, it aims to correct the semi-fluency and ineffective communication which too often result from a child's limited functioning both languages.

Zintz (1969) suggested to classroom teachers of bilingual programs:

> Students should feel that his language is a good one that it expresses his ideas and wishes adequately, and that he may be justly proud to use it. All of the people in his extended family use the language which he has learned as his first language, and he derives his ego strength and sense of personal worth as a member of that particular ethnic group.

Our society has placed a premium on the acquisition of a second language only after the learner has completed his early education. For example, most colleges require two years of foreign language to be taken during the high school years before admitting the student; most doctoral degrees require mastery of a second language, etc. Traditionally a person who can speak more than one language is considered more "cultured." However many "would be students" give up trying to fulfill this requirement because it is difficult to develop an "ear" for foreign languages once a monolingual has passed the early education years.

Many authorities agree on the early start of second language acquisition, among them Theodore Andersson who says:

These years (3 to 5) are valuable for language learning,

> for we know that children of this age can, under ideal conditions, absorb as many languages as are spoken in a given environment.

Mary Taylor (1970) quotes from Psycholinguistics:

> There is a general opinion throughout the literature that his is a favorable period, because the second language will not compete directly with the first and the learner has not yet lost his mental placidity... The greater readiness of children than of older persons to learn the language of their environment is associated with the craving for membership in the group of their contemporaries.

Most students who are starting school have not developed the fear of making oral mistakes which most adults have. Being young seems to give them the literary license to make mistakes and still keep trying to perfect a language, however once we get beyond the third or fourth grade it becomes embarrassing to mispronounce a word.

The writer has observed in many adult foreign language classes that the students feel very uncomfortable when they have to recite individually. Children however, have been observed to possess a great desire to mimic and learn a foreign language.

The writer found in this review that achievement testing of a bilingual education program is difficult for the lack of reliable instruments; that not enough testing has been done yet. However, the measurements that have been taken indicate that bilingual education does not interfere with achievement in the basic curriculum.

A study of mathematics achievement in the Laredo, Texas bilingual program showed that those who learn math in two languages do better than those instructed in only one language. Studies of the Miami program indicate that students in a bilingual program at least do as well as

others in the standard subjects, meanwhile attaining the advantages of a second language (Stanfield 1970).

If non-English-speakers are achieving as well as English speakers as these studies indicate, then one of the objectives of bilingual education is being met.

Joshua Fishman (1970) indicates that various types of bilingual programs are prescribed on assumptions which have no apparent basis reflecting the kind of language pattern that exists in the target area.

Districts considering the implementation of bilingual programs are advised in the literature to gather data which will give guidance with respect of the type of program to be recommended. Information to be gathered is not normally available in school records. This information to be gathered should refer to such data as the proportion of students speaking a certain lanuage and proportion of time devoted to each language.

Once this data has been studied, the parents of students in the target area for the proposed bilingual program should be given the option of having their children in a monolingual or bilingual program.

If the parents opt to have their children in a bilingual program, the types of programs and the product of each program should be explained to the parents for further consideration.

Parents may be given an option of any of the following programs described in Fishman's typology:

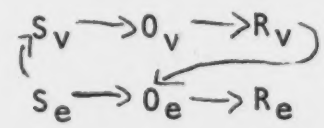
Transitional bilingualism. The native language is used in primary grades until their skill in English is developed to the point that it alone can be used as a medium of instruction.

Monoliterate bilingualism. Indicates development in both languages for aural-oral skills, but are not concerned with literacy skills in the mother tongue. This type of program is intermediate between language shift and language maintenance.

Partial bilingualism. Seeks fluency and literacy in both languages, but literacy in the mother tongue is restricted to certain subjects. This kind of program has language maintenance and culture maintenance objectives.

Full bilingualism. Programs have as their objectives the development of all skills in both languages in all domains. All subjects are taught in the vernacular and the second language except in the languages themselves.

Methods and Procedure



In the diagram above, the thinking process is described by Carroll (1959) as one in which as individual responds to a stimulus (S).

In this thinking process Carroll explains that the receiver of the stimulus (S) organizes (O) his thought before giving a response (R) to the stimulus. When the stimulus is in English (S_e), the two other following steps are performed in English by the English dominant student.

The author of this paper expands on this model to explain the case of an individual whose language is other than English.

A student whose dominant language is not English must translate to the vernacular creating a double track in order to arrive at the

desired English response. This mental process is in reality a shifting of "tracks" which is noticeable in the early stages by the deep concentration of the student while he translates the stimulus word for word and at times responds in English incorrectly. Some of these nonsense answers can be explained in cases where one word in the question may have multiple meaning in English, but only one meaning in Spanish. For example let us say that the teacher is developing the concept of direct object. The sentence to be used in this exercise is "The man scaled the mountain." In a word for word translation used in double tracking, the Spanish-speaking student has only one image for the word scale. At this point the student is more concerned with how a man could lift a mountain to weigh it than he is about the direct object concept of English grammar.

The sadness of this example is that the student has been able to translate every word in the sentence, but the message conveyed by the sentence puzzles him. He does not realize the multiple use of theword scale. In cases such as this the compound bilingual has a time and concept retarding factor which is created by his double track thought process. This example of interference illustrates the difficulty of multiple meaning which is troublesome even to a monlingual, however one can see where this would be multiplied in the case of a non-English-speaker who has the additional interference of finding relationships within a new syntactic framework. This mental process is described by Osgood (1965) as compound bilingualism.

In cases where the student cannot translate the stimulus into the vernacular, the concept being developed by the teacher may have a

delayed response for an indefinite period of time. Continuous double tracking may frustrate the student to the point of exhaustion which in turn may prevent further attempt to learn. Prolonged exposure to failure may create a permanent block to any "foreign stimuli."

Another delaying factor in the learning of English as a second language has been cited by Miles V. Zintz (1969):

> ... in cases where the teacher is impatient and/or misunderstanding, the student develops insecurity instead of security, worry instead of competence and makes the English language an enemy instead of a friend.

By creating such emotional block, the student may refuse to participate in the oral exercises necessary to acquire proficiency in the second language.

To reduce double tracking and hostile feelings toward second language acquisition, this bilingual program will use the mother tongue as a vehicle of instruction. At different times of the school day and using the second language, the same concepts will be presented in a review lesson.

Since the conepts have been presented earlier, it is believed that the student will be able to follow the instructions with greater ease, even though the concepts are reviewed in his second language. In this manner the program attempts to inculcate in the student what Ott (1967) describes as two <u>automatic</u>, <u>independent</u>, and <u>self respecting</u> systems, which define him a coordinate bilingual.

Coordinate bilingualism enables the individual to function efficiently, independently, and with dignity in either linguistic environment. He is conditioned to respond directly to any stimulus much in the same way that one responds to the traffic signal lights. The

response is instantaneous without going through the process of matching the colors with the muscle reaction or rationalizing the reaction in accordance with the color of light.

Elizabeth Ott (1967) explains it further in the following manner:

> When language teachers urge their students to try to think in a foreign language, they mean to say that the student should code their intensive behavior as directly as possible into the foreign-language responses, without there being an intervening role for native-language responses.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Public education in the United States has been in the hands of the people who have attempted to fulfill the needs of the majority of their student population.

Equal education has been one of the ultimate goals of district personnel and community. The goal itself is an ideal goal: unfortunately this has been interpreted to mean that every student should receive instruction in English. States such as California and Texas passed laws prohibiting instruction in a language other than English.

Unfortunately this practice did not take into consideration the fact that every year thousands of students begin their education not understanding the language of instruction.

The results of such a system have been continuous scholastic failure for these students.

Existence of laws. Today the "English Only" laws have been repealed in California and Texas to allow non-English-speakers to receive instruction in their native language. In this manner it is anticipated

that the students will learn concepts without having to wait until they master English.

Bilingual education, as this process is called, is still in its infancy. Commercially prepared materials which are available have not been field tested extensively. Most of these materials have to be adapted to meet the local needs of the students and staff.

Bilingual programs which are planned with the cooperation of the school community and designed to meet the needs identified by a joint successful. Parent and community involvement should be a continuous process to insure current input of attitudes toward the program. The structure of the program should be flexible enough to allow modification or adjustment in needs or objectives reflected by parent or community evaluation.

Only individuals who will commit themselves to the objectives of the program should be selected. Staff selected must be made aware of the team approach to teaching; any individuals who display professional jealousy should be eliminated. Once candidates have been screened for sensitivity and competency, they should be given intensive preservice training and the regularly scheduled year long inservice.

Since the training is time consuming, candidates should express a commitment to the concept of bilingual education and a willingness to assume the additional training responsibility. For the same reason districts should plan to offer equivalent credits, college credits, or extra pay for extra time as an incentive to participate in the preservice and inservice training.

Districts which are fortunate to have within their ranks personnel capable of conducting bilingual or bicultural instruction should

by all means use them. However, care should be exercised in selecting leaders of training sessions. Bilingual-bicultural education is a specialized field and longevity in a district does not qualify personnel to direct or conduct training sessions for teachers in a bilingual program.

Because of the shortage of teachers who are bilingual, a school district may attempt to shift bilingual teachers from their regular assignments to the bilingual program. In most cases these teachers are teaching foreign language classes.

Foreign language classes at the present time are usually being offered in schools located in high socioeconomic school communities as electives. Students who elect to take these classes are usually highly motivated, college bound youngsters. Bilingual programs, on the other hand, especially those funded under Title VII, are for the most part located in low socioeconomic areas. The contrast in students and economic make up may cause culture shock in teachers who make this change of assignment.

Teachers should not be assigned to a bilingual program solely on the basis that he represents a given language culture group. This employee may have reached the degree of assimilation that would make him insensitive to the problems of the non-English-speaking student. Some of these teachers may even want to forget that they are members of such language culture group in which case the objectives of the bilingual program may be jeopardized.

Most bilingual programs being implemented in the primary grades have plans to expand as the students advance to the intermediate grades. It behooves the director of such a program to identify in

advance teachers who meet the qualifications of the program and encourage them to participate in the inservice training being offered to staff of the on-going program. In this manner the students would be assured of a trained teacher and continuity will be established.

The beginning of early childhood bilingual education is a step toward the realization that a citizen no longer needs to wait until he is a graduate student to speak a foreign language. Eventually bilingualism will be desired by the English dominant parents and students and become an asset for people living in bilingual communities. When the Anglo majority begins to value bilingualism and seeks its development through bilingual programs, then the stigma will be removed from bilingualism. With this goal comes the promise that "culturally deprived" and "disadvantaged" will be discarded labels. There is great hope for people at all socioeconomic levels to have increased understanding and respect by changing a monocultural monolingual way of life into a pluralistic society that develops human potential wherever it exists. The major goal of bilingual schooling is to develop fully functioning balanced bilingual citizens in every community where there are non-English-speaking people and thereby enrich the lives of all concerned.

REFERENCES

Carroll, Herbert A. Mental Hygiene - The Dynamics of Adjustment. Englewood Cliffs, N. J. Prentice Hall, Inc. 1959.

Christian, Chester C. "The Acculturation of the Bilingual Child." "The Modern Language Journal. 69 (March 1965) 160-165.

Fishman, Joshua A. Bilingual Education in Sociolinguistic Perspective. Address at The Fourth Annual Convention of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. San Francisco, California, March 20, 1970.

Gaarder, Bruce A. "Organization of the Bilingual School." Journal of Social Issues. Vol. XXIII. No 2. 1967.

Guerra, Manuel H. PhD. Language Instruction and Intergroup Relations Bureau of Intergroup Relations, California State Dept. of Ed. 1967.

Lambert, Wallace E. "Psychological Approaches to the Study of Language: Part II: On Second-Language Learning and Bilingualism." Modern Language Journal. 47 (March 1963) 114-121.

Osgood, Charles E. (Ed.) Psycholinguistics, A Survey of Theory and Research Problems, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, p. 139, 1965.

Ott, Elizabeth H. A Study of Levels of Fluency and Proficiency in Oral English of Spanish-Speaking School Beginners. Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1967.

Ramirez, Manuel. Potential Contributions by the Behavioral Sciences to Effective Preparation Programs for Teachers of Mexican-American Children. Las Cruces: New Mexico State University, 1969.

Stanfield, Edwin. A Bilingual Approach: Education for Understanding. Austin: Southwest Intergroup Relations Council, Inc. 1970.

Taylor, Marie E. An Overview of Research on Bilingualism, California State Department of Ed., 1970.

Zintz, Miles V. What Classroom Teachers Should Know About Bilingual Education. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, March, 1969.